

CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A fibrous reinforcement for use in making composite items that comprises:

a) a fibrous support having a surface, said fibrous support comprising reinforcing fibers selected from the group consisting of fiberglass, carbon and ceramic; and

b) a compound comprising:

i) a resin component comprising a resin ~~one or more resins~~ selected from the group consisting of thermosetting prepolymers having a softening temperature of 150°C or lower and ~~or one or more~~ thermoplastic polymers with a glass transition temperature lower than 300°C; and

ii) an inorganic phosphorus compound wherein the treatment ratio for the fibrous support with said inorganic phosphorus compound falls within the range of 2%-20% by weight.

Claim 2 (original): A fibrous reinforcement according to claim 1 wherein said compound is located throughout said fibrous support.

Claim 3 (original): A fibrous reinforcement according to claim 1 wherein said compound is located on the surface of said fibrous support.

Claim 4 (original): A fibrous reinforcement according to claim 1 wherein said compound comprises about 20%-60% by weight of said resin component and about 80%-40% by weight of inorganic phosphorus compound.

Claim 5 (original): A fibrous reinforcement according to claim 1 wherein said thermosetting polymer has a softening temperature of between 50 and 100°C.

Claim 6 (original): A fibrous reinforcement according to claim 1 wherein said thermoplastic polymer has a glass transition temperature of between 50 and 200°C.

Claim 7 (original): A fibrous reinforcement according to claim 1 wherein said inorganic phosphorous is red phosphorous.

Claim 8 (original): A fibrous reinforcement according to claim 1 wherein said thermosetting prepolymer is selected from the group consisting of bismaleimide resins, cyanate resins, epoxy resins and mixtures thereof.

Claim 9 (original): A fibrous reinforcement according to claim 1 wherein said thermoplastic polymer is selected from the group consisting of polyimides, polyether imides, polyether sulfones, polysulfones, polyether ketones, polyether ether ketones, polyamides and polyamide imides.

Claim 10 (currently amended): A process for fabricating a fibrous reinforcement comprising a fibrous support, said process comprising the steps of:

a) providing a mixture comprising:

i) about 20%-60% by weight of a resin component comprising a resin ~~one or more resins~~ selected from the group consisting of thermosetting prepolymers having a softening temperature of 150°C or lower and thermoplastic polymers having a glass transition temperature lower than 300°C; and

ii) about 80%-40% by weight of an inorganic phosphorus compound;

b) providing a fibrous support having a surface, said fibrous support comprising a reinforcing fiber selected from the group consisting of fiberglass, carbon and ceramic; and

c) treating said fibrous support with said mixture to provide a treated support wherein the treatment ratio for the fibrous support with said inorganic phosphorus compound falls within the range of 2%-20% by weight.

Claim 11 (original): A process according to claim 10 wherein step a) comprises providing said mixture in pulverulent form and wherein step c) comprises applying said pulverulent form of said mixture to said fibrous support to form a powdered support and wherein said process includes the additional step of thermally fusing said mixture in said pulverulent form with said fibrous support.

Claim 12 (original): A process according to claim **10** wherein said thermosetting polymer has a softening temperature of between 50 and 100°C.

Claim 13 (original): A process according to claim **10** wherein said thermoplastic polymer has a glass transition temperature of between 50 and 200°C.

Claim 14 (original): A process according to claim **10** wherein said inorganic phosphorous is red phosphorous.

Claim 15 (currently amended): A process according to claim **10** wherein step a) comprises providing a mixture wherein said resin is ~~one or more resins are~~ dispersed in water and said inorganic phosphorus compound(s) is dispersed in water to provide a water dispersion of said mixture and wherein step c) comprises immersing said fibrous support in said water dispersion of said mixture.

Claim 16 (original): A process according to one of claim **10** wherein said thermosetting prepolymer is selected from the group consisting of bismaleimide resins, cyanate resins, epoxy resins and mixtures thereof.

Claim 17 (original): A process according to claim **10** wherein said thermoplastic polymer is selected from the group consisting of polyimides, polyether imides, polyether sulfones, polysulfones, polyether ketones, polyether ether ketones, polyamides and polyamide imides.